

## ABSTRACT

In a UMTS (universal mobile telecommunications system) Terrestrial Radio Access Network (UTRAN) based wireless system, a wireless network element (e.g., a base station) exchanges information with another wireless network element (e.g., a radio network controller) via data frames (uplink or downlink). Each data frame comprising a header portion and a payload portion, which comprises a QoS class indicator field. Illustratively, the eight bit spare extension field of a UTRAN data frame (uplink or downlink) is used to convey a four bit payload type indicator and a four bit QoS class indicator.